

Resolutions Adopted at the SAMWU 8th National Congress 2006

1. Quality Affordable Services – A Service Delivery Strategy For The Local Government Sector.

Introduction

Samwu has, over a number of consecutive National Congresses, developed a fairly clear perspective on service delivery at local government level. In the main, our service delivery policy framework is informed by the view that services must be provided equitably, accessibly, affordably and on a universal basis. This in turn is central to the notion of developmental local government with a mandate to improve living conditions and contribute to poverty eradication. Our policy framework seeks to place the needs of the working class and the poor at the center of any service delivery strategy rather than policies that will please national and international capital (such as making cities “international competitive”). In turn this means that the restructuring of the local government must be premised on:

- a) A strongly interventionist state:
- b) Public sector delivery with the municipality as a direct service provider.
- c) Provision of services based on needs, rather than the ability to pay.
- d) A process of prioritising and providing services that is transparent and open: and
- e) A democratic and accountable municipality.

So while we have over time consistently refined our approach to restructuring informed by the above, and made interventions on specific issues, progress in advancing our positions historically have been uneven. This strategy is meant to inform our engagement on service delivery issues in the period up to our next National Congress in 2009. It does not incorporate all our well documented argument in favour of public sector delivery but draws on some in highlighting strategic interventions that need to be made in the coming period.

We should also not lose sight of the fact that there are also major infrastructural development requirements needed to improve the lives of many. These can only be advanced from a national level and if there are critical national policy shifts. They include.

- a) An urgently needed rail programme, as part of a comprehensive public transport system, for both people and goods to take pressure off the roads.
- b) The establishment of a housing utility company to drive the construction of publicly owned housing and rental stock. At the same time rural housing and housing for farming labour must be brought under local government regulations.
- c) The far from complete school building and refurbishment programme and other public building initiatives.

- d) Electrification of all households and municipal facilities at 21st century standards. This must include a review of standards. Whereas 60Amps is the standard in affluent areas, 5-8 Amps connections- which is too low for a hotplate or single element heater- is all that is required in poor urban households. In newly electrified rural areas, the situation is even worse. Amperage as low as 2.5 is sometimes used there with most rural connections at the still unacceptably low level of either 10 or 20 Amp.
- e) The further extensions by Eskom of rural electrification is also critical in providing cheap electricity needed for startup rural production.

These must be incorporated into all our engagements and programmes.

1. The fight against privatisation.

Even before our policy framework had emerged, we were campaigning against the privatisation of public services. Developments within SAMWU and beyond have seen this campaign take on an ebb and flow character. It is particularly the vexing issue of being in Alliance with a ruling party that supports privatisation that has contributed to this situation.

Notwithstanding, we remain strongly opposed to privatisation, which includes the introduction of commercial principle into public services delivery and the contracting model of local government. We reject the principle of cost recovery and financial self-sufficiency for services as well as the notion that defaulters on municipality accounts should be treated as normal commercial debtors. These principles have the effect of undermining free lifeline provision of services. We must therefore examine the how best to participate in the High Court action brought by local communities against the cost recovery policies of the Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality. This must be in the context of seriously taking up our 7th National Congress resolution against pre-paid meter.

Two other specific issues to be taken up seriously is our opposition to the proposed Gautrain and the ongoing restructuring of the electricity distribution industry. Regarding the Gautrain, we must seek to re-direct debates towards public transport as a whole including trains and busses. In respect to the REDS process, we must ensure that Programme of Action adopted by our CEC is taken up serious way.

The NFA made provision for the introduction of the private sector but only when compelling reasons exist. When this happens, it must only be on a limited short term basis and as part of building the capacity of municipalities to directly deliver services. Alternatively, the private sector could be brought in to carry out specific infrastructural developments, or to perform particular areas of work in relation to specific services.

Compelling reasons could include the following:

- a) Emergency situation
- b) Work for which the necessary skills are not available among the existing workforce; and

- c) Work for which the municipality does not have existing capacity. The private company that is contracted in will be able to assist in building that capacity.

This issue should be further debated at the CEC for while we note that the NFA provides for private sector involvement, the NFA was the outcome of a negotiations process. Our position remains opposed to private sector involvement in direct service delivery. This is at the same time we remain committed to harnessing public sector capacity across all levels (inclusive of public utilities) in striving to build local government capacity.

We will therefore continue to fight for the return of all privatised services. In other words, the re-municipalisation of services as opposed to the regulation of services. Too many problems are being experienced in the way Municipal System Act and IDP processes are unfolding.

Part of our approach must also include organising the workers in these private companies and continuing to press for the extension of the bargaining council scope to include private companies.

While public goods and services remain a target for governments BEE strategy, we will need to finalise the debates we have started on this matter to avoid any uncertainty and confusion when it comes to defending the public sector. At the very least we must be demanding regulations that prevents BEE in the area of public services. This must be accompanied by regulations that seek to bring under tighter control the remuneration of all public representatives.

Steps must also be taken to obtain full information on all companies operating in the municipal sector, including a list of all directors. All shop stewards and full-time union officials must also be required to declare any business interest

We must also continue, in the period ahead, to popularise our position against privatisation amongst members and the broader community. The strategic objectives of our campaign remain:

- a) Ensuring universal access to free basic services;
- b) The outlawing of pre-paid meters
- c) Ensuring that services remain in the public sector in a non-commercialised form, and reclaiming all privatised and commercialised services, particularly in the waste management sector.
- d) Ensuring transparent, participatory developmental local government, with communities actively involved in decision making.
- e) Local Government funding: and
- f) By developing guidelines and models for the delivery of services through the public sector in a non commercialised way.

To achieve these, will require that we give real meaning to building links with other working class formations engaged in service delivery struggles. The recent spate of service delivery linked protests provides a clear indication of unhappiness at the slow pace of extending basic services to all. A lot of our past successes were build on a dynamic media strategy. This must

remain a central feature of our campaign. Adequate financial resources must also be allocated to the campaign for it to be effective.

Education must continue to remain an integral part of our fight against privatisation. Current shop steward education programmes that deal with restructuring must be reviewed to assess their effectiveness and where appropriate these programmes must be enhanced. Training that targets members must also incorporate restructuring issues.

A one-day programme of action must be planned as a kick-start to the campaign.

2. Local Government finances

The government macroeconomic policy GEAR imposes a restrictive framework of fiscal discipline on all spheres of government. For local government, apart from the reduction in intergovernmental grants, it means that they are meant operate with a zero-budget deficit and their ability to increase their budget is constrained by budget capping. To a large extent, therefore, the restrictive financial framework that local government must operate within is something that is imposed by one section of the state (central government) onto another (local government) It is within the power of the state to remove this financial strait-jacket- if there was the political willingness to do so.

We are ultimately seeking that.

- a) Sufficient financial and other resources are provided from the national fiscus for existing and future service delivery, for both capital and operational expenditure. This must be based on the service delivery targets of each municipality. At the very least this will require a fundamental change to equitable share formula.
- b) Other fiscal and monetary policies, that seek to generate the large-scale redistribution of public resources towards working class needs and interests, must be introduced.

We have placed the following proposal before the recent Local Government Sector Summit to address this situation.

- a) The introduction of policy compelling investors to invest at least 5% of their investible income in government stocks and bonds.
- b) Halt the ongoing reduction of personal and corporate taxes. We have already given away R73 billion over ten years. This has not led to improved investment as hope for.
- c) An increase in the budget deficit to at least 5%. This will produce an extra 16% billion.
- d) Banks currently lend well over R700 billion to individuals and companies. Small reductions in the interest rate cuts should be channelled into forced savings programmes for social and economic developments. A 1,5% interest cut will raise R11 billion a years.
- e) The government is currently spending almost R50 billion a year on repaying what is known as the Apartheid Debt. This debt on loans from banks and other institutions that were ready to profit from Apartheid.

- f) The introduction of a small tax on the all money flowing into the country in the form of what is called nonproductive investment.
- g) A small tax on the monies that companies and individuals are investing in other countries all over the world. In 2003 alone, amount invested in other countries all over the world. In 2003 alone, amount invested in other countries was almost R17 billion. Very little of the profit made abroad is brought back into the country.
- h) A review of the approach taken to many of the Black Economic Empowerment Charters. The mining Charter alone is expecting to raise R167 billion to create a small number of black mine owners.
- i) The Public Investment Commission (PIC) is responsible for controlling monies held in the Government Employees Pension Fund. This is public money amounting to over R300 billion. Investments aimed at building broad based economic development should be prioritised.
- j) There are other public bodies like the Industrial Development Corporation using public money to fund private business. Unfortunately their focus is on BEE as an end in itself with no real focus on industrial development and job creation.

These should be taken up at all levels of government and in our ongoing engagement at Alliance and broader community level.

In addition we must continue to push for abolishment of provincial governments as this will, amongst others, release additional funds to local government.

3. Building public sector capacity

Restructuring the public sector for effective service delivery and implementing this restructuring must be the first step that municipalities undertake before considering any other form of service delivery. Consistent with this approach is bringing in of other public sector bodies or organs of state, such as water boards, to assist municipalities in service delivery. This approach is contained in the National Framework Agreement and is promoted in various bits of legislation but often ignored by the authorities.

Concrete steps must also be taken to ensure implementation of the Local Government Sector Summit agreements on improving service delivery at Local government Level.

The establishment of the proposed Support Unit for the Public Provision of Municipal Services must be vigorously pursued. We cannot allow government to drag its heels while it continues to support initiatives that promotes the privatisation of municipal services.

SAMWU must also become more active in the PSI Quality Public Services Campaign. Shared experiences can only serve to build greater levels of cooperation and solidarity amongst public sector workers and with the communities they serve.

Our participation in the LGSETA- and the Energy SETA while the demarcation issue remains unresolved- must be bolstered through building the capacity through building the capacity of our representatives and clear positions on appropriate skills development projects must be formulated and taken up at SETA level. A starting point is to ensure that all Workplace Skills Plans are signed off by the Union at local level.

We must also take steps to empower and capacitate our shopstewards to deal with employment equity issues. Funding for this should, where possible, be sourced from the LGSETA and the Energy SETA.

The development of appropriate skills must not however happen in isolation. Demands in this area must go hand in glove with demands on adequate staffing levels, tools and equipment's and new funding arrangements.

4. Building our own capacity to engage.

We attempted to build our capacity to engage at local level on restructuring matters in various ways. The direct involvement of workers in restructuring is not only about issues like conditions of service and job security. It is equally about contributing to the way in which municipal services are delivered.

There are two strong arguments to be made for involving workers directly and actively in the processes and decision making around restructuring.

- a) Firstly, they are at the cutting edge of service delivery, since they are the ones who are directly providing services. Through their day to day experiences they can contribute much to understanding the problems with service delivery, where wastage is occurring, and how service delivery can be improved and made more effective.
- b) Secondly, they occupy a unique position as both the direct providers of services and the users of services. This gives them an all-round understanding of service delivery and how it can be improved.

Our shop steward training module dealing with restructuring and an initiative to equip organisers and shop stewards to use Section 77 & 78 investigations to advance our positions as examples. We must be honest and admit that these capacity building initiatives have not delivered the desired results. The absence of adequate provincial and national co-ordination of restructuring initiatives including regular reporting and monitoring is a further weakness that must be addressed.

We must, as a matter of urgency, identify other suitable steps that can be taken to bolster the involvement of our shop stewards and organisers in the restructuring process. An example is creating space for shop stewards and organisers to share their restructuring experiences with workers in other locations.

At the same time, we must always keep in mind the ever-changing political environment and its impact, our collective and individual ability to take forward our positions on restructuring.

5. Building working class unity in the struggle for basic services.

Each successive National Congress has stressed the importance of building links with community organisations in the fight against privatisation and for services to remain under

the ownership and control of the public sector. A lack of real political will has characterised our approach to building these links.

The changing local environment has meant that communities are often moving ahead of the Union in taking up service delivery issues. Often municipal workers are seen as responsible for non-delivery. While we have previously spoken about the need to build “pragmatic programmes” that seek to educate and mobilise communities around our position on service delivery, developments require a re-think. Ongoing unilateral restructuring and growing unhappiness at community level require a much more dynamic approach to building a broad front for affordable public services. The pre-paid meter issue provides one such opportunity for alliance building.

The SACP has started to speak about greater working-class unity on a non-sectarian to speak about building greater working-class unity on non-sectarian basis as a means to advancing working class interests against a growing capitalist hegemony. We must bring to conclusion, as a matter of urgency, the ongoing debates on the new social movements.

6. Restructuring proposals and minimum service level

We have started developing clear positions on minimum services levels, tariffs, free basic services etc. For a number of services. Some of these reflected in our submission to the Local Government Sector Summit. These positions need to be sharpened to strengthen our hand when engaging on these matter. The starting point is a consolidation of all past resolutions on various services and thereafter the identification of any gaps.

Our research capacity must be enhanced to develop and strengthen proposals for all municipal services. One such priority is in the area of Sport and Recreation and we must seek to finalise a clear position by the first CEC of 2007. The revitalisation of our Service Committees is central in building this capacity.

We must draw on local and international experiences in formulating proposals for each service that cover, amongst other, the following:

- a) Minimum standards and service levels.
- b) Tariff structure including free basic services.
- c) Funding arrangements
- d) Skills requirements, and
- e) Structure.

Conclusion

It was at our founding congress in 1987 that our opposition to privatisation was first spell out. The 1994 democratic breakthrough provided an opportunity to incorporate broader issues of restructuring as we sought to reverse the apartheid legacy at local government level. The rapid shift from politics of nationalisation to that of privatisation by the ANC has made our task more difficult. The next three years will define how successful we will be in our fight.

Adopted at the 8th SAMWU National Congress

28-31 August 2006

2. Working class internationalism

1. Introduction

A founding principle of Samwu in October 1987 was its commitment to international working class solidarity. We were on the eve of a negotiated transition ending minority rule and legislated racism and installing a legally non-racial, non-sexist and human rights-based democracy. It was also the eve of the sudden collapse of previously existing socialism in Eastern Europe.

Our relations with trade unions globally were strongly influenced by this context. South Africa was the focus of the global anti-apartheid movement in which trade unions were important players.

Our 1st NC debate, adopted in the context of remaining cold-war tensions, was on whether to affiliate with the western trade unions internationals aligned with the ICFTU or with communist unions under the WFTU. We avoid affiliating to on the basis that this would be divisive. Instead, we committed ourselves to “building true international working-class solidarity.” In 1898 we resolved on the need to strengthen links with social bloc unions and in countries “involved in anti-imperialist struggles”. We also emphasised forging links with unions in Africa and Southern Africa in particular.

By our 5th NC we focussed more on globalisation and noted the role of the Global Financial Institution (GFI) and World Trade Organisation (WTO) as the key proponents of neo-liberalism. We stressed the need to move beyond “ceremonial” contacts alone and the need to ground our international policy in economic and social policy, the advancement of the working class and socialism. We committed ourselves to support initiatives that “seek to build an alternative to the dominant world order”

In the struggle to promote socialism and oppose imperialism we identified the following as key issues:

- a) The promotion of democratic worker control
- b) Unity of workers in each country
- c) The anti-privatisation campaigns.
- d) Rights of women

In what follows this paper will seek to deal with a number of themes in our policy and endeavour to build international working-class solidarity. First, we need to look at the global context. A context within which international capitalism is appearing more and more unstable. While the economies of the United States and the broader European Union are stagnating, the Chinese economy appears to be overheating. In turn we continue to witness

growing attacks on the social democratic rights and increased military interventions as the ruling class seeks to protect its interest. At the same time however, these attacks have prompted a growing leftward shift in various regions. This does provide space for advancing an agenda which seeks to promote working class interest.

Globalisation and World Trade.

In 2006 as the COSATU discussion document puts it the globe is dominated by

“ A powerful coalition of national states, transnational corporations and international finances institutions, driving agenda to expand the market by forcing developing countries to open their economies”

As a union we have tracked developments around the General Agreement on Trade in Service (GATS) and played a critical role in COSATU in bringing pressure on government not to make any concessions. We have also exposed those concessions made by the departing apartheid government on health care and must campaign for their scrapping. Our democratic government cannot be held to rule determined by a previous illegitimate government.

Until such time as South Africa has developed an industrial policy consistent with taking forward working class interests, we call for a moratorium on all multi-bi-or pluri-letaral trade agreements, including GATS.

Along with COSATU , the PSI and other Global Unions and Social movements we have opposed the current round of WTO negotiations supporting the position that “no agreement is better than a bad agreement”

There is already more than enough so-called free trade. The idea that developing countries and Africa in particular, will benefit from being given access to developed countries agricultural markets is highly misleading. The flow of mineral resources and agricultural products to the developed world is what imperialism has been about from the start. It dictates a future for agriculture in which single crop capitalist production is dominant rather than food security for the peoples of Africa. The Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) negotiations are about denying developing countries the space to pursue industrial development strategies based on domestic markets.

These WTO negotiations are about maintaining a trade system based on the developing world extracting mineral resources from all part of the world to feed their manufacturing and patrol driven economies. It means the continuing destruction of the environment and the globe.

Newly independent African countries were upended in the early 1960s when sharp declined in world prices for cocoa in the case of Ghana or copper in Zambia sent their economies into crisis. We need an internally focussed economic strategy for Africa and Southern Africa.

NEPAD shows little distance from following a capitalist accumulation path. The AU similarly seems unable to deal with the hold on power of entrenched elites.

In the WTO trade talks Brazil and India have played a central role in opposing the deal. These “emerging markets” together with china represent a new force in the global economy. However, we should not have any illusions about their role. They are also states operating as part of the capitalist system. Chinas interest is to replace Europe in extracting raw material from Africa. South Africa engagement with African politically and economically can be seen in the same light. Capitalism is no longer located just in its old centres in Europe and North America but increasingly located itself across the globe. Most of the largest South Africa companies are now global transnational.

2.Global Debt.

The other scale side of setting the balance of wealth right in the world is to end the enslavement of poor and developing nations to debts accumulated due to that imbalance in past trade and development funding.

The World Banks heavily indebted poor countries(HIPC) programme has been slow and unsuccessful . Out of +- 40 countries who might be eligible only 18 have been granted relief since 1998. Many of these are now slipping back into debt because the terms of trade and donor aid do not allow them to re-establish viable economies.

We are in our past resolutions in rejection of the repayment of debt including our own odious debts accumulated by the Apartheid regime. National debt can and must be written off.

3.Grants and International Aid

We also need to be clear about how Donor Aid works.

Aid is put to use by engaging private construction firms or other multi-nationals from the donor nation. Consultants are appointed by the Aid provider for the tendering step and onwards. Multinational construction companies come in with machinery and technicians and with no intention of creating jobs or leaving behind skills or machinery. Formulate project monitoring and assessment tools are imposed that are often not suitable to the context and are frequently driven from a perspective that reduces outcomes to numbers with little attention to quality.

On the other hand there are some conditions on Aid which we should not oppose. For decades now corrupt “gate keepers” elites in Africa have extorted their “fees” on every transaction. We also need to support provisions which seek to promote democracy , human rights and trade union rights.

This will still not get to the heart of the problem. The reversal of decades and centuries of unequal economic relations has to be speeded up way beyond what the Global financial institutions, who gate keep capitals interests, can provide.

4.Millennium Goals

UN General Assemblies Millennium Development Goals are very modest not revolutionary. Yet they are at the heart of questions of poverty and development and of the imbalances in the wealth of nations and continents.

Its all about 2015 not 2010! Whether the Soccer World cup will boost our economy is guess work. What it wont do is eradicate poverty. It is already apparent that neither in South Africa

or the world will these Millennium Goals be met by 2015. They never the less provide an important plank around which to campaign because they are also essentially about Quality Public Services.

PSI has engaged in a number of campaigns linked to the Millennium goals. Notably the Make Poverty History Campaign. We have not always been up to the mark supporting such campaigns. We need to be much faster in identifying the strategic directions in which we may be able to push campaigns of this nature which are characterised by a range of tendencies and personalities with no particular interest in advancing the public sector and worker driven development.

5.Sustainable Development.

Any alternative global economic order has to be sustainable. The problems of global warming and climate change are serious and growing. A future of water wars is not far off if we do not reverse human population growth. We do not need Chinese population control measures. It is poverty which leads to large families. Improved living standards lead to smaller families.

What we do need is an economic system called capitalism based on greed and a massive inequality in wealth. The starting point of capitalist is greed is in the destruction of both the environment and people. Socialism cannot be modelled on the 1950's and 1060's developments in Russia and Eastern Europe. They ended up following a "catch up" approach to capitalism and left behind some of the world worse cases of population including nuclear pollution. There is a limit to what our Earth can provide. In nature ecological systems are self sustaining, that is why we have to protect such system. Socialisms economics must be centred on equilibrium not beliefs that there is something called perpetual economic growth. The developed world has to start reversing its over development.

6. Trade unions, political parties and social movements.

As a trade union our first objective has been to seek to strengthen trade union global unity.It should be evident that this cannot be exclusive of building ties with a wide variety of other movements that have sprung up in response to the effects of globalisation. There is now a very broad set of grouping based primarily in the local communities and in non – governmental organisations that is opposed to the current world order. This is centred mainly around the World Social Forums.

This is a very different movement from the established political party movements of the west, whether social democratic or communist, with which we and all of our trade union allies in North America and Europe have historically build their central alliences. Such political parties have become increasingly centralised even if in their earlier lives they were more pluralistic . The same can be said of the Workers Party of Brazil or our own ANC. Their origin both lie in a plurality of forces fighting a Military regime and the Apartheid Regime respectively. Now as COSATU and the CUT of Brazil we are surely experiencing the same problems of increased centralisation in the party which has since become governing party.

With the rest of Africa the question will continue to loom large, as it has in the past. The trade unions of the anti-colonial struggles of the 1950's and 1960's uniformly turned into conveyor belts once the nationalist movements came to power. These were 2 way belts , demanding pacification of the workers on the one hand, and providing upward mobility into government and business on the others,. There are no doubt many other legacies affecting what constitutes African trade union today, including the general corruption of business trade union models promoted by capital and the ICFTU in its cold war warrior phase. A disease we too have seen affecting some of our fellow affiliates and some of our own leadership.

The question is what the relationship between trade unions and traditional political parties on the one hand, and the array of social forces on the other should be? The former make a virtue out of conformity, the other encouraging diversity and independence of action by local groupings. Political parties having the central objective of trying to gain state power through social movements stay outside of holding state power challenging governments to implement policies which meet the needs of their constituencies.

For our European allies in the trade union movement the degeneration of their labour and social democratic parties has taken longer, but today we both face the same question. How does the trade union movement relate to political parties in circumstances in which voters are increasingly alienated from a process in which the contesting parties are all at the center and focussed on sustaining capitalism.

7. Is the international balance of forces changing?

COSATU discussion document is optimistic in suggesting that the leftward shifts in Latin American political orientation is an indication of space to manoeuvre. The victory of Hamas, growing Iraqi opposition to the US occupation and the resilience of Iran are further indicators of shifts in the global political situation. On the trade front, the developing nations have rejected the Agricultural and services agreement in the WTO.

On the other hand the military presence of the USA and Britain in support of Israel against Palestine, in Iraq and Afghanistan, and in Somalia does not suggest that the political leadership of capitalism is unwilling to protect its interest by the most extreme of means.

We must however distinguish between the government of these world powers and their people many of whom, and to a growing extent, have opposed these military incursions.

Global, continental and regional trade union federations have a role to play in resisting the attempts by the US and its allies to deepen their political and economic hegemony across. SAMWU must link with unions in these countries where changes have started to happen, Adequate resources must be set aside to fund these activities.

8. Where does the Global Union Movement fit in?

When COSATU and CUT of Brazil joined ICFTU the hope was that we would be able to forge a left alliance to shift its orientation. This does not seem to have been achieved. The ICFTU remains conservative in many of its positions. The ICFTU is currently in a process of merger with Christian WCL. The Communist WFTU still exists based today in India.

NEHAWU is affiliated to its Public Sector Trade Union International (TUIT) . its recent world congress in Johannesburg does not indicate much substance. In short there is no global union centre able or willing to lead any major union campaign directed to radically changing the world order.

The Southern initiative on Globalisation and Trade Union rights (SIGITUR), which sought to bring together unions in developing countries seems to have become relatedly inactive.

What used to be referred to as the trade secretariats, such as the PSI, have also undergone considerable change in recent years. They have also renamed themselves the Global Unions. We need to do much more analysis of what the Global Union represent at this stage.

9. PSI and bilateral relations

In the third NC we decided to affiliate to the PSI on the grounds of their role in supporting the struggle against apartheid and struggles for the rights of women and public sector workers. At the same time, we asserted our right to bilateral relations with public sector unions not affiliated to the PSI. We also committed ourselves to campaign for better facilities within PSI to promote relations between countries in the developing world such as Brazil, India, Korea and the Philippines.

We have had limited success in building such bloc within PSI. Centrally the idea that we can build such country ties ignored our financial capacity to do so. In a case such as Brazil where we have had some contact it has been PSI that facilitated such engagement. Consolidation of a more established form of solidarity work is restricted by language and by the municipal union being localised and only recently, and not all that successfully, persuaded by the PSI to fragmentation but need to do some hard research to better understand what possibilities exist. We have also had extensive engagement with our Cuban counterpart but found it difficult to find a form in which this becomes more meaningfully sustained.

10. Africa and Southern Africa

As part of a means of engaging Southern Africa while also spreading the range of leaders who would engage, we “twinned” our Provinces with different neighbouring countries. There has been some misunderstanding of what this means. It does not mean that the relationship with any other union is with a Province. It has to be a relationship with SAMWU as a national union.

We must not confuse our desire to build trade unions in Southern Africa and Africa with the actual achievement of such objective. There are substantial problems that African trade union organisation faces. In many cases the lack of democracy hampers vibrant unionism. Even in a context of comparative democracy the legal regime is often not supportive, particularly for public sector unions. There is also often a lack of militancy and a tendency towards business unionism. It is unclear if some unions have any organising or collective bargaining strategy. In some case we end up doubting there is a union to build a relationship with. In yet others having built what we think are developing relationship with the leadership of a union, they move on, or internal disputes lead to a weakening of the union and the relationship.

At the same time we must acknowledge that large parts of Africa continue to be plagued by conflicts which almost always stem from ongoing exploitation of its natural resources. This has in no small way contributed to the weak state and/ or absence of trade unions in many

parts of the continent. Many so-called development programmes are decided in the absence of any real consultation with the people they are meant to benefit.

We face the dilemma of not wanting to dictate or appear arrogant about our own models and achievement. On the other hand, there is much in our legacy of union building and struggle from which fellow unions in Africa need to learn. On union one sector and one federation one country are surely universal objectives. The severe problems we are currently facing as COSATU unions raises debates and lessons about the nature of unions that we should not be hiding from others. We must avoid seeking to be domineering about our strengths, but we cannot resort to unprincipled positions. There are basic principles to which we are committed.

The bottom line is that we must embark on serious engagement with workers and their unions on the continent. COSATU should be at the forefront of this process.

COSATU is involved in the Organisational of African trade Union Unity (OATUU) the ICFTU's African Region and in the Southern African Trade Union Co-ordinating Council (SATUCC). We get very few reports. COSATU assessment in 2003 was that all of these organisations had major problems. This situation must be turned around.

11. Migrant Workers, political and economic refugees.

We have Southren African nurses, doctors and professionals working in the developed world. There is a global labour market for the more skilled, underppined by the poverty and lack of economic opportunity at home.

We have explicitly political refuges fleeing persecution and war in countries such as Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Somalia and the Congo. There are economic refugees moving south because there is nothing to live on at home. Similar flows of people in search of a better life take place into Europe.

In response the established peoples or nations react to what they see as a threat to jobs or livelihoods and resort to ethnic and racial xenophobic responses. There are thought to be as many as 4 million Zimbabwean "Illegally" in South Africa today as the Zimbabwean economy continues to collapse. Meanwhile South African capitalists buy up cheap assets in Zimbabwe.

South Africans workers should not forget that migrant labour in Southren Africa has been there since the start of the colonial period. We have a new form of migrant labour where "people without papers", including well educated youth with IT skills, can be exploited. We need to make more assertive steps as COSATU to put pressure on government to deal with problems in our management of refugees and their legislation.

We have resolved to fight xenophobia and that we should recruit all workers irrespective of where they are form.

12. Relations with unions in developed countries.

Our bi-lateral relations with CUPE (Canada) as cemented through the Municipal Services Project and our ongoing Gender Project are most successful. Our relationships with UNISON

and other British union. ABVOKABO (Netherlands), the Nordic Unions and other European Countries have been uneven.

Two of the more prominent project-based engagements with European Unions involved the Solidarity Project with ABVOKABO and the current and ongoing HIV/AIDS project supported by UNISON. In both cases the initiative and objectives came to us from outside. There was an extent to which project was pre-determined.

The first of these which involved a joint bipartite exercise with the Municipal Employers on the Netherlands and SALGA was a labour relations-based project. Was it success or failure? Were our Netherlands counterparts optimistic about the possibilities of us learning from their highly co-determined system? The answer is clearly that it was a failure because of the difficulties arising from SALGA's unwillingness to concede any ground that might limit their power to dictate terms on every front. Nevertheless, it was a project with many merits and at the time helped to bring us into a more co-operative relationship with IMATU. Yet in the end it just came to an end- and there has been little further interaction with AKVOKABO.

In other respect our relationship with North American and European Unions have not gone beyond mutual congress attendance at one or another workshop. These in themselves may have provided lifelong lessons to those who attended. It is always more difficult to organise ways in which this learning is filtered back into our own union.

It is time we did a much more detailed analysis of the content of many of these relations and of the respective unions and find ways of widening our interaction beyond mutual visits. It is one thing to promote the importance of international solidarity and another to make it more concrete.

14.Funding projects.

In the period from 1987 to 1994 we were the recipient of large-scale material aid from European and North American unions, through the PSI, for educational and legal work. Yet in principle we strove to be self-sufficient and achieved this- we should not lose sight of this fundamental issue. On the other hand, international solidarity work international security work is expensive.

The financial foundation to build global trade union solidarity is a problematic issue. Most funds are not from the unions' resources. In the struggle against Apartheid there were notable cases where locals, or branches actually collected solidarity donations directly from members. The larger portion of aid which is provided for projects that unions want to promote. This can be problematic, but we must consider whether or not COSATU should be demanding support from our government for projects in Africa.

The problem is that too often this co-determined source of funding can come with strings attached, or may engage unions in projects in which their national governments, and multi-national companies are promoting their own interest.

14.Educational and Research Based Projects.

If we want to get beyond simple swapping leadership in congress visits the first step is in extending educational and research-based projects.

The MSP provides something of a model for a research Network. It brings together CUPE and SAMWU, and sympathetic academics in Canada and South Africa.

We do not however seem to have been able to engage regularly with any other Southern African or South research networks. The further problem is that we tend always to want to engage around the big political economy issues first working conditions and the occupational strata and location of union membership. Issues which can help us strategise about who to engage with in order to most effectively promote our anti-privatisation campaign.

Educationally we do not have much going either directly or indirectly. We need to vastly improve our financial administrative capacity to track funding opportunities for educational activities.

We have not mapped out any clear strategy to provide education and training to other union in South Africa, though this may in part be because they are not organised enough or suspicious of our intentions.

15. Twinning.

Much confusion has arisen around what we mean by twinning. In one form it was always about union regional or branch linking up with regions and branches in another country. When the anti-apartheid movement of Britain dissolved itself and set up a new organisation to take forward solidarity it mapped out region to region twinning. So, example Eastern Cape was to be twinned with Scotland though union, youth etc. Nothing is known to have come of this where unions are concerned.

Once democratic local government emerged, and SALGA was formed much of the emphasis switched to city-to-city twinning. Some of this is purely ceremonial or project based. Other arrangements are cemented by common business interest, and the official visits double as trade and business venture opportunities. Unions and civil society are generally left out. There were however times when we were invited but declined.

We have said that we should more fully investigate the content of these relationship. This is a painstaking research project. One we might want to seek funding for and externalise in the first place.

The other level of this type of involvement is that SALGA is affiliated to a number of international local government organisations. In some cases, these bodies or their Conferences are open to participation by unions and civil society. Again research is the starting point for developing a strategic policy and answering questions about the advisability of participation.

We must take immediate steps to review our successes and failures in this area as part of developing a broader strategies and tactics to guide how we relate to unions and other formations of civil society beyond our South African borders. All our twinning activities should however have, as one of its main objectives, the fostering of strong relations on a worker basis.

16. Cyberspace

Modern electronics communication and the internet have transformed the possibilities of worker contact and union to union contact. It creates a new level at which people can exchange ideas and information without the expenses involved in global level.

We should be pressing to create such links between all of our HOB officers and their counterparts in other unions. Officers in HO should have well developed lists of websites which will assist them with research. If we can get our Provincial officials computer literate and our system working the possibilities for twinning at other levels is great.

We should also be encouraging members and shopstewards to explore unions across the globe using their web side. Workers should also be encouraged to find links with workers in the same field of work in another country to help them with their workplace skills. For example, we have a relationship with the Fire Brigades Union in Britain. We need to encourage members to look at their website we need to explore taking forward the relationship through members professional interests as well as their trade union activism. The same could be looked at for other occupational grouping.

It is also possible to use e-mail and website technologies in international and online education and debate. Our electronic systems implementation is critical to our international work.

17. PSI Regional Sub Regional and National Committees.

PSI has 5 Regions of which Africa and the Middle East form one. This region is in turn divided into 4 sub-region one of which is southern Africa. Each Region has a secretary and office. The sub-regions also have offices and Secretaries and various further officers or co-ordinators depending on how many projects have been established.

There are large questions about whether the attempt to build relatively conventional trade union federal structures can ever work. The structure currently expects that affiliates in a country first form a National Co-ordinating Committee (NCC). This then elects 2 representatives to the southern African Sub- Regional Advisory Committee (SABRAC). In turn each sub-region is represented on The African Regional Executive. Parallel to this at every level is a system of women's committees even though there has now long been a 50/50 quota system.

If 3 small unions in a neighbouring country cannot merge then how do we expect them to trust representatives from the other union, or call them to account? Even within COSATU we are not able to work together effectively as public sector unions. The SUBRAC and Regional Executive meetings get involved in very formal and administrative debates.

It is strongly suggested that we should not be trying to build conventional representative union structures from the ground up across the globe. We need rather to adopt much looser processes within the "Regions" and "sub-regions" centred on Conferences and events that are campaign and policy based. Events which may focus on services or particular issues and are designed to promote education and campaigns. Gender work can still be central, but in this looser form and in ensuring it cuts through all other work.

The democratic accountability of the PSI as whole then requires to be strengthened at the global level.

18. The Public Services International (PSI)

Next year PSI World Congress will also mark the centenary of its founding in 1907. Then it brought together public sector workers in Europe. Today it represented members in every corner of the globe as shown in the table:

Regions	Affiliates	Countries	Members
Africa and Middle East	153	43	1,500 000
Inter-Americia	140	35	3,300 000
Asia- Pacific	122	22	2,000 000
Europe (including Eastern and Europe and Russia)	+ - 185	+ -38	13,200 000
Global	+600	138	20, 000 000

Constructed mainly from PSI website. European figures calculated from others as are not provided. Also some reference to EPSU website.

A global union federation requires to be funded through affiliation fees. PSI has indexed –its subscription level to a countries development level to assist with payment. Generally however the bulk of its income comes from unions in the OECD countries (the developed world). Unions from less developed countries contributes relatively little or not at all. Much of PSI work is through funded projects. It receives money for education and gender related work from the Nordic countries in particular.

There is currently a top level transition underway as the General, deputy General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary reach retirement age. It appears to have lead to considerable tension within the international office. There is no real transparency about this. What follows is speculative and derived from a few sources.

Underlying this appears to be problems of funding and of what types of projects or campaigns should be central to the PSI work. On the one hand there are those in the education and project based work, including gender work and the Pay Equity Campaign who get the larger share of the funded resources available. On the other hand those involved in work around water and electricity and solid waste , and in promoting global campaigns such as the Quality Public Services campaign, and in work challenging the Global financial Institutions (GFI) believe they are under-funded.

At its heart there is perhaps nothing new in this. It is as old as unions themselves. How much goes into administration and structures, into education and economic policy struggles and how much does the union engage in political and economic policy struggles and much does it just seek to look after its members conditions of services.

Of more concern is the extent to which major affiliates do not seem to participate vigorously in the work of the PSI. They may pay there affiliation but do not appear to care too much what happens. Some such as UNISON now also have split loyalties between PSI and the

private services UNI. In addition the European unions have established the European Public Sector Union as a federation within the EU. It is understandable they have real issues to deal with within the expanded EU, but it does not reflect an inward rather than global focus. PSI and EPSU appear to have come to some sort of co-operative agreement. From the perspective of unions in the rest of the world it does not look ideal that in PSI's strongest Region it has this autonomous organisation. If at the start we hoped to operate with PSI on the basis of developing assertive blocs and alliances this does not seem to have occurred. The problem with conference leadership exchanges or PSI World Congresses is that they are not the ideal opportunity for substantive talks.

The broad approach to the PSI International Conference events which center it around an agreed programme of action for the next 5 years seems sound. Such programmes as the Quality Public Sector Campaign (QPS) or the Pay Equity Campaign (PEC) is what can create a united global movement. The day to day management of staff internationally, and of year by year management of budgets and implementation plans, or responses to new developments have to be determined by a Central Executive Committee that makes no pretence at being indirectly representative of every union on the ground. The current Executive Board which manages PSI between its 5 yearly International Congress is made up of representatives from the Region at the end of the long steps described above.

What we do need is to strengthen how regions are represented at this Global level without having to waste money on Regional Executive Committees or SUBRAC's. Rather we should seek to strengthen the provisions for the holding of Regional Conferences at least once between each international Congress and elect leaders from there, and again in Regional caucuses in the International Congress itself.

It is inevitable if not essential that the mega unions with the money have strong influence. On the other end of the scale we have to start being a lot tougher about what constitutes a union. In our own history when PSI insisted on continuing to fund splinter unions we were harsh in our criticism. Many African unions are not weak because of oppression, but because they are not worker controlled by a mass membership. We must not shy away from seeking to ensure that COSATU and South African unions get fair share of the representation at an international level relative to membership. There need to be clear criteria based on paid up membership of unions with minimum threshold of membership and clear structures of worker control.

Africa currently would get its Executive Committee Chair and Deputy on the EC plus 1 for every 400 000 paid up members. The publicity orientated website (rather than verified paid up membership) indicates 1,500 million members in the African Region. On this basis there would be 5 African representatives. These numbers may need to be increased to allow a minimum of one per sub-region the critical issue is that there will not be sub-regional elections even if informally in an African Conference there is lobbying within Regions to come up with nominations.

A balance will need to be established within the Executive Board between the \$ Regions which accepts a degree of proportionality without allowing overall domination of the developing by the developed.

The Executive Board meets once a year and is like our CEC. There is then a Steering Committee made up of the International Office Bearers. This meets at least twice a year. It

may need to be expanded by election of a committee representative of Regions from members of the EC. Means must be found of teleconferencing and internet based process to keep the cost of governance down.

19.The way forward.

Let us start by considering something that we had previously resolved:

“It is therefore imperative that SAMWU refrains from piling one good resolution on top of the existing ones. The fundamental matter to be addressed is to develop the guidelines towards implementation. We have to concentrate on this aspect of the work.

(6th Congress

Resolution 2000)

In updating the objectives we must do the following :

- **Promoting Democratic Worker Control**

In our Southren African, African and global dealings, and in how we approach the PSI the center of such work will be in our engagement with unions in Southren Africa through educational work and in seeking to promote stronger unions on the ground.

This included our own engagement with our members in involving them in understanding global issues and in Global Campaigns.

One of the implementation plans not carried out was to develop a Solidarity Project with unions organising local government workers with particular attention to Lesotho, Swaziland Botswana and Namibia. The start was meant to be that we host a Conference on Local Government and privatisation. We should work through and with PSI, but must insist on, and conduct real research on local government and its workers in the region. Developing the PSI is dealt with above. It is a complex issue. The heart of it is however that it is misleading to create structures at a global level which pretend to be controlled from a grass roots membership.

- Unity of workers in each Country.

One union industry and one federation on country are universal objectives. What it means must be looked at in each country context. It does however seem sensible that in countries with small populations and few public servants one union is essential. On the other hand we are in global terms a small country and yet have not settled how we approach sector within the broader public services. This we deal with in looking at union mergers.

- The anti privatisation Campaing.

In many ways we have engaged our international work has privatisation and promoted our views of the role of the state in development. We need to try and strengthen out Public engagement with the global Quality Public Services Campaign and with a possible emerging follow on campaign for a General Agreement on Public Services (GAPs). The

objective is not as such an agreement, but to contrast with the WTO and its GATS. The “gaps” are gaps in public services central enforced through privatisation and the shrinking of the state.

- Rights of women.

What was then a struggle around womens rights is now more focused on the meaning of the distribution of gendered power within society and the labour market. We are engaged through the MSP related Gender projects in some of the central issues. We do however need to ensure that we take up other gender issues such as those involved in the Pay Equity Campaign. We will need to take forward some of the policy debates around womens or gender structures and the use of quota's at the same time. It is an internal and international debate.

This process of implementing plans to take forward out objectives is a complex one which needs to be taken in hand by the CEC. There are however some critical issues of approach that are necessary if we are going to have a realistic and workable plans.

- Proper research must precede our development of more long term solidarity work. We do not just engage in another country or with another union without first drawing up a report on the union and its membership, structures and labour relations context. Such work is also what Conference attendance should be about- we need to get back to some form of reporting, and proper preparation of any delegates. Too often we are just rushing in.
- We should be centring our work on joint research and educational projects and exchanges. This can include study visits to or by other unions, but we must go prepared. As previously resolved we should not engage in a ceremonial visit without a strong attempt to follow it up with a more substantial agenda based bilateral. Agenda based means well prepared. We do not hold CEC meetings with or go to negotiations unprepared. Why do we think we must conduct our international relations at such superficial levels?
- Material Aid such as computers is fine, but should include training and efforts to link up electronically.,
- We also need to be clear about which unions are in or out of the PSI and why when we get involved. We have always reserved our right to engage outside of PSI , but we should also be seeking to strengthen PSI.
- We need in the run up to the PSI World Congress to focus rigorously on trying to sort out what we want out of PSI in Southern Africa. This also links to issues of internal mergers because the partner in another country is not always just a municipal union.
- On the other hand we are one of the few organisations, given the failure of SALGA that can champion the vision of a participatory sphere of local government not just in South Africa, but Africa as a whole. Instead of just looking to union to union links we have to look to supporting and engaging in events which include other civil society groupings.

- Engagement with or co-hosting big events of this nature may also involve looking at how we can draw on the resources of organisations of the United Nations such as UNDP or ILO, as well as looking into the question of Government Aid funding.
- We have to take much more vigorous steps to try and create electronic linkages between officials performing different functions in the union and their counterparts in other unions and between workers and worker. We must be careful of a strong tendency in this work for it to end up being help in the hands of a narrow grouping in the union.

Conclusion

The objective of our engagement in international working class solidarity is to “seek to build an alternative to the dominant world order” The struggle for socialism which is also a struggle to reverse an economic system that is environmentally sustainable.

Adopted by 8th SAMWU National Congress

28-31 August 2006

Resolutions adopted at the 8th SAMWU National Congress

Note: The following are stand-alone resolutions that could not be suitably incorporated into the various Strategy Paper.

1. Proudly South African Campaign (PSA)

It was resolved that.

- Further discussion on the PSA campaign must take place within the Union in the run-up to the Political School.
- A discussion document incorporating, amongst others, the following must be developed and circulated to assist debates within our structures:
 - (a) The ideological basis of the campaign
 - (b) Whether or not the campaign is consistent with our own policies of working class internationalism;
 - (c) How should we relate to China as a government and Chinese workers.
 - (d) Potential xenophobic tendencies that arise from the campaign

Moved: Western Cape.

Seconded: North West.

2. Plan for implementation of resolutions.

Noting that:

- a) SAMWU has in the past congresses adopted resolutions which have largely not been successfully implemented and /monitored

- b) This weakness is caused as a result of unclear mechanisms in terms of communications of decisions taken to the lowest end of our structures
- c) There hasn't been synergy from National, Provincial and Local structures in implementing such resolutions.
- d) The union is consistently challenged as a result of new leaders who are elected into positions without clear background on existing resolutions and policies taken in the past and the process to track them back to their present phase.

Believing:

- a) The adoption of a free programme of action after each Congress aims to realise the implementation of resolutions adopted during the Congress.
- b) Most of resolutions adopted at previous congresses remain relevant.
- c) If we were implementing the resolutions we were to be respected as a force such that no decision would be taken in the Local Government sector and various areas of society without taking into serious considering the interest of SAMWU.
- d) The resolution serve as an educational tool to shop stewards and members if documented in a particular manner.

Resolves that:

- a) The resolution adopted in the Executive and Congress Meetings be integrated into organizational program in order to advance the objectives of the Union. This could be realized through effective monitoring of activities at the level of Shop Steward Committees and Branches.
- b) The relevant Department must be tasked to document resolutions adopted in the Executives and Congress Meetings in a booklet in order to enable shop stewards to engage constructively with members and in the outcome of Congress must be integrated into Shop-Steward Committee and Branch activities in a manner that requires specific engagement and accountability with members.
- c) Where appropriate, sub committees may be established in accordance with existing provisions to further facilitate implementation.